

Stewardship

Introduction

- Our two most important resources for stewardship are time and money.
- The clock and the dollar are such substantial factors in so many parts of life that we must consider their role in any serious discussion of godly living.

The disciplined use of time

- God gives us both the gift of time and work while we live on this earth.
- Use time wisely because the days are evil.
 - Eph 5:15-16.
 - The natural course of our minds, our bodies, our world, and our days leads us toward evil, not toward Christ likeness.
 - These evil days bring many “time thieves”. What are some of your biggest time thieves?
 - Thoughts must be disciplined, otherwise, like water, they tend to flow downhill or stand stagnant.
 - Col 3:2. Set your minds on things above.
- Wise use of time is the preparation for eternity
 - 2Cor 6:2. Now is the favorable time, behold, now is the day of salvation.
 - Make sure that your eternal destiny is with Jesus
- Time is short
 - James 4:14. You are a mist that appears for a little time and then vanishes.
 - Scripture describes our life like a vapor, a bit of steam that quickly vanishes.
- Time is passing
 - 1John 2:17. The world is passing away, along with its desires.
 - Time is fleeting, going fast.
- The remaining time is uncertain
 - Proverbs 27:1. Do not boast about tomorrow, for you do not know what a day may bring.
 - We have no idea when our last day will be
- Time lost cannot be regained
 - Unlike money or other resources, once lost, time could never be regained.
 - John 9:4. We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day, night is coming, when no one can work.
 - Phil 3:13-14. Pressing on.
- You are accountable for your time
 - Romans 14:12. So then each of us will give an account of himself to God.
 - 1Cor 3:13-15. We will be judged for our time on earth and will receive a reward or suffer loss.
 - We are accountable for the words we speak the time we spend and the talents we have received.
- Time is so easily lost
 - Except for the fool, no other character in the book of Proverbs draws the scorn of scripture like the slothful sluggard. The reason? His lazy and wasteful use of time.

- The sluggard never has time for the things that really matter, especially things that require discipline. Before he realizes it, his time and opportunities expire.
- We value time at death
 - Many famous infidels are described as being in agony at the time of their death, crying out for more time.
 - Most pursue a course of life based more on pleasure than on the joy found in the way of gods disciplines.
 - Proverbs 5:11-13.
 - The way you have used your time can provide great comfort to you in your last hour.
 - Jonathan Edwards. Resolved, that I will live so as I shall wish I had done when I come to die.
- Time's value in eternity
 - Hell will echo forever with agonizing laments over time so foolishly squandered. Luke 16:22-25.

The disciplined use of money

- 1Tim 5:8. The disciplined use of money requires that we manage it in such a way that our needs and those of our families are met.
- Because we invest most of our days working in exchange for money, in a very real sense our money represents us.
- God owns everything you own
 - . 1Cor 10:26. Exodus 19:5. Job 41:11.
 - This means we are managers or, to use a biblical word, stewards of the things God gives to us.
 - We own nothing God owns everything.
 - The question is not “how much of my money should I give to God“ but rather, “how much of gods money should I keep for now ?”
- Giving is an act of worship
 - Phil 4:18. Paul called the money they gave a fragrant offering, a sacrifice acceptable and pleasing to God.
- Giving reflects faith in God's provision
 - Think about the poor widow and Mark chapter 12. She gave all that she had and trusted in God to provide for her. The rich contributed out of their abundance and had plenty left over.
 - Our faith is strengthened as we give generously and trust God to provide for us.
- Giving should be sacrificial and generous
 - Paul describes the Macedonians as people living in extreme poverty and yet they gave generously. 2Cor 8:1-5.
 - Polls consistently show that the more money Americans make, the less sacrificially they give.
 - Whitney says of people who give sacrificially, “ I never made a sacrifice. I always got something greater in return than I gave.”
- Giving reflects spiritual trustworthiness

- Luke 16:10-13. One who is faithful in a very little is also faithful in much, and one who is dishonest in a very little is also dishonest with much.
- If we are not faithful with material riches then God will not be able to trust us with spiritual riches.
- Giving - love, not legalism
 - Love of God should motivate giving to God. We should want to please God by our giving because we love Him.
 - 2Cor 9:7. Each one must give as he has decided in his heart.
 - Notice the absence of religious demand as a motive for giving.
 - How would you feel about receiving a gift from someone who feel they had to give it?
- Do you give willingly, thankfully, and cheerfully
 - 2Cor 9:7. Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.
 - Ask yourself: what is my attitude toward giving?
- Giving, an appropriate response to real needs
 - Acts 2:43-45.
 - Acts 2:32-35
 - Acts 11:27-30
- Giving should be planned and systematic
 - 1Cor 16:1-2.
- Generous giving results in bountiful blessings
 - Luke 6:38. ... with the measure you use it will be measured back to you.
 - 2Cor 9:6-8. You will reap as you sow.